

over Beard et al. (US 5,317,663) in view of Estrella et al. (US 6,695,485 B1) and Ernst et al. (US 5,825,955). Claim 34 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Beard et al. (US 5,317,663) in view of Estrella et al. (US 6,695,485 B1) and Szilagyi et al. (US 6,305,961 B1). The examiner is requested to reconsider these rejections.

Claim 29 claims that the latch inserts are separately connected to the housing. In Beard et al. the inner housing halves 410, 420 are captured in grooves 238, 239 by their flanges 450. There is no disclosure or suggestion in Beard et al. of the first inner housing half 410 and the second inner housing half 420 being separately connected to the main body 205. Attached as Appendix A is a marked-up copy of Fig. 2 of Beard et al. As seen by circled areas A and B, each inner housing half 410, 420 has interlocking projects which mate with each other at both opposite sides of the halves 410, 420. The halves 410, 420 have to be assembled to each other before insertion through the open side aperture of the main body 205 shown in Fig. 1. The split sleeve 500 is also inserted into the two halves 410, 420 before the assembled halves 410, 420 are inserted into the open side aperture of the main body 205 shown in Fig. 1. The assembly of the halves 410, 420 and split sleeve 500 needs to be assembled together before insertion through the open side aperture of the main body 205, otherwise the split sleeve 500 could not be inserted into the housing (see how it is captured in Fig. 4). The access panel is then attached to the main body 205 after the assembly 410, 420, 500 is inserted through the open side aperture of the main body 205. Thus, the halves 410, 420 are connected to the

main body 205 together as an assembly; not separately connected to the housing (main body 205) as called for in claim 29. Contrary to the statement by the examiner, the halves 410, 420 (even though they are separate members) are not inherently connected to the main body separately. Beard et al. teaches that they are connected to the main body 205 together as a subassembly.

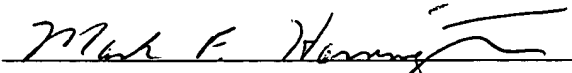
The other art of record does nothing to cure the deficiencies of Beard et al. Therefore, claim 29 is patentable and should be allowed.

Though dependent claims 30-38 and 44-45 contain their own allowable subject matter, these claims should at least be allowable due to their dependence from allowable claim 29. However, to expedite prosecution at this time, no further comment will be made.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain, the Examiner is invited to call applicant's Attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,

  
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12/22/05

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